

REMARKS

It is the belief of the Applicants that the claims of the present invention are directed to a common subject matter and the search and examination of the entire application can be made by the Examiner without serious burden.

Claims 1-12, 20-22 (Group I) and claims 13-19 (Group II) relate to a connector device and a method for connecting the same. Claims 1 and 13 include essentially the same subject matter and elements. In addition, the device and method are closely related. It is respectfully submitted that serious burden would not be placed on the Examiner to search the common subject and examine both Group I and Group II claims together, obviating the need for restriction.

It is recognized that in order for this paper to be responsive to the Office Action, an election must be made. In the Office Action of August 16, 2004, restriction has been required to one of the following two groups of claims:

(I) Claims 1-12, 20-22; and

(II) Claims 13-19.

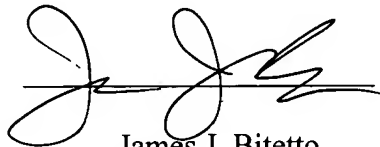
Accordingly, claims of Group (I) are elected for examination at this time with traverse. Applicant reserves the right to pursue Group (II) claims (13-19) by way of a separate divisional application.

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the restriction requirement. Early and favorable action of the case is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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